

EXHIBIT A

U.S. Department of Justice
Drug Enforcement Administration

REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

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|---|---|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Program Code [REDACTED] | 2. Cross File <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> [REDACTED] <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | Related Files | 3. File No. [REDACTED] | 4. G-DEP Identifier [REDACTED] |
| 5. By: Larry A Rodriguez, SA At: TEGUCIGALPA, HONDURAS COUNTRY OFFICE | | | 6. File Title [REDACTED] | |
| 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Closed <input type="checkbox"/> Requested Action Completed <input type="checkbox"/> Action Requested By: | | | 8. Date Prepared 03-22-2017 | |
| 9. Other Officers: SA Gary Travis | | | | |
| 10. Report Re: Interview of Carlos Alberto VALLADARES Garcia on 03-22-2017. | | | | |

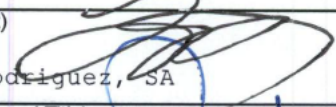
SYNOPSIS

On 03-22-2017, SA Larry Rodriguez, as witnessed by SA Gary Travis, interviewed former Honduran police officer Carlos Alberto VALLADARES Garcia at the US Embassy in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, in regards to VALLADARES' criminal activities in Honduras.

DETAILS

1. On 03-22-2017, at approximately 1:51 p.m., SAs Larry Rodriguez and Gary Travis showed their DEA credentials and identified themselves as DEA agents to VALLADARES. The entire interview was conducted by SA Rodriguez in the Spanish language. SA Rodriguez explained to VALLADARES that VALLADARES was not under arrest and that his (VALLADARES) cooperation was entirely voluntary. VALLADARES was free to go at any time. Before beginning the interview, SA Rodriguez gave a copy of the Miranda warnings (in Spanish) to VALLADARES, who thoroughly read and understood the warnings. VALLADARES signed the Miranda warnings form, as witnessed by SAs Rodriguez and Travis.

2. SA Rodriguez asked VALLADARES to provide a short background of his (VALLADARES) career as a Honduran police officer. VALLADARES stated he entered duty as an investigative agent for the Honduran Ministerio Público on September 17, 1995. VALLADARES worked as a homicide investigator in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, from 1995 to 1999. In 2000, VALLADARES was transferred to Tegucigalpa, Honduras, to work as operations chief until

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| 11. Distribution: Division | 12. Signature (Agent)  Larry A Rodriguez, SA | 13. Date 03-22-2017 |
| District | 14. Approved (Name and Title) Alvaro A Agrelo-Perez, CA | 15. Date 3/30/2017 |
| Other SARI | | |

DEA Form - 6
(Jul. 1996)

DEA SENSITIVE
Drug Enforcement Administration

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2002, when he was transferred back to San Pedro Sula to take charge of the homicide division. During 2001, VALLADARES was promoted to deputy inspector; about five years later, to police inspector. In 2005, VALLADARES was assigned to El Progreso, Yoro Department, as the police chief. The following year, VALLADARES moved back to San Pedro Sula to be in charge of the personnel division. In 2009, VALLADARES was assigned to Santa Bárbara as the investigations coordinator. In 2010, VALLADARES worked as the police chief in Quimistán, Santa Bárbara Department. Three years later, VALLADARES was assigned to Gracias, Lempira Department, as the police chief. VALLADARES added that he had received a recognition award from the US Embassy for his work in gang-related crimes while assigned in El Progreso, Yoro Department. Additionally, in 2005 and in 2009, VALLADARES received recognition awards from the Honduran National Police for his work as a police officer.

3. In 2006, VALLADARES graduated with a law degree from the Universidad Autónoma de Honduras. In 2011, VALLADARES graduated as a licensed criminal investigator from the Police University in Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

4. In January 2014, VALLADARES was dismissed from the Honduran National Police. VALLADARES had failed a polygraph examination on June 2013. VALLADARES took the polygraph examination as part of a "prueba de confianza" (trust vetting) initiated by the Honduran police at the time. VALLADARES stated there were five questions in the exam, of which he remembered three, pertaining to the following: "association with organized crime", "taking bribes", and "illegal contact with drugs". VALLADARES stated that he was nervous during the polygraph examination and that had to step out of it momentarily. VALLADARES then added that the polygraph examiner's opinion was that VALLADARES was no longer fit to be a police officer because he had failed all the questions by trying to use counter measures. Since 2014, VALLADARES has worked as a defense attorney.

5. VALLADARES stated that he (VALLADARES) first became "torcido" ("twisted", corrupt) in 2004, after investigating a shooting attack outside of Hotel La Cordillera in San Pedro Sula, where VALLADARES worked as chief of the homicide division at the time. VALLADARES subsequently learned that the motive for the attack was related to rivalries between drug trafficker Jorge ECHEVARRIA Ramos and the CACHIROs. The

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intended targets were Jorge ECHEVARRIA Ramos and his girlfriend Margarita LOBO, niece of Pepe LOBO. The attack was in retaliation for the murder of a younger brother of the CACHIROS allegedly perpetrated by ECHEVARRIA Ramos sometime in the past. When VALLADARES responded to the scene of the attack, another shooting took place at a nearby clinic where the wounded were being treated. An unidentified bodyguard of Margarita LOBO was killed in this second attack. Jorge ECHEVARRIA Ramos and Margarita LOBO survived. ECHEVARRIA Ramos subsequently offered \$30,000 US currency to VALLADARES to incriminate the CACHIROS. VALLADARES declined.

6. During 2004, Samaél MENDEZ, a police officer working under VALLADARES and alleged *sicario* (hitman) for the CACHIROS offered VALLADARES an unspecified bribe to leave the CACHIROS alone, or be killed. VALLADARES declined and requested the transfer of MENDEZ to another jurisdiction.

7. VALLADARES was then approached by police inspector Elvin SALINES and a cousin of the CACHIROS named Liser Antonio FUNEZ. Both offered VALLADARES a bribe in the amount of 15,000 Lempiras (Honduran currency), which VALLADARES accepted in March 2004. The bribe was to keep VALLADARES from executing an arrest warrant against LEO for the attempted murder of ECHEVARRIA Ramos and Margarita LOBO, and to leave the CACHIROS alone during the upcoming Easter holiday. The following month, VALLADARES was approached again by FUNEZ, who told VALLADARES that Devis Leonel RIVERA-Maradiaga AKA LEO wanted to meet VALLADARES. In April-May 2004, VALLADARES met with LEO at a gas station in a boulevard on the way to El Progreso. LEO had a proposal to VALLADARES: to get the best lawyers in San Pedro Sula to arrange a court hearing for LEO to provide a voluntary statement in which LEO denied any involvement in any crime. LEO didn't use the lawyers provided by VALLADARES and subsequently found other attorneys who arranged the court proceedings, using an impersonator for LEO known as OSCARITO LNU, a cousin of the CACHIROS. The courts were paid off by the lawyers and, after the proceedings, LEO walked away. VALLADARES subsequently met with MONCHO LOBO, the father of Margarita LOBO, to dissuade Margarita LOBO from pressing charges against the CACHIROS for the shooting attack.

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8. Every time VALLADARES counseled LEO on legal matters or provided any other assistance VALLADARES was paid anywhere 20,000 - 30,000 Lempiras. VALLADARES assisted LEO in other matters, such as facilitating the recovery of the driver license of a friend of LEO, and, in another occasion, recovering, and returning, a handgun belonging to another friend of LEO that had been seized by the police.

9. When asked about his involvement in the shooting attack at the San Pedro Sula airport circa 2011, VALLADARES stated the following: Leo had asked VALLADARES to accompany him (LEO) "for the afternoon". VALLADARES, who was at the time assigned to Quimistán, Santa Bárbara Department, drove LEO to the San Pedro Sula International Airport and waited in the parking lot. VALLADARES said he didn't know that a shooting was going to take place and didn't ask LEO what was the purpose of them waiting in the parking lot. LEO then asked VALLADARES if VALLADARES could get (traffic) orange cones. VALLADARES said that was not possible. LEO became upset and instructed VALLADARES to leave the area. VALLADARES drove LEO out of the area, only to return to the airport shortly thereafter. LEO told VALLADARES "you are going to hear how is the war". Once back at the airport parking lot, LEO instructed VALLADARES to leave the area again. As VALLADARES was driving away from the airport, he heard a hail of gunfire. VALLADARES stated that the targets of the attack were members of the GRILLOS criminal organization. VALLADARES added that a *sicario* working for the CACHIROS known as Dorian SOBOLBARRO was involved in the coordination of the attack.

10. VALLADARES stated that in 2010-2011, he (VALLADARES) helped LEO recover \$2 million US currency that had been seized in a vehicle in La Flecha, Santa Bárbara. The money was drug proceeds from a transaction that was to be paid by associates of the Miguel Arnulfo VALLE DTO, but LEO ended up selling the drugs to another unidentified drug trafficker. Once recovered, VALLADARES gave the money to Elvin ESCALANTE and Orlin MARADIAGA, both workers for the CACHIROS. VALLADARES said that about \$100,000 US currency was left inside the vehicle to be presented as "the seizure" to authorities.

11. VALLADARES stated that in 2012-2013, VALLADARES was involved in the receipt of over 200 kilograms of cocaine in a clandestine airstrip in the

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Cortés Department. VALLADARES said he (VALLADARES) was not carrying any weapon as there was no need to. There was a large group of people carrying AR-15 and AK-47 assault rifles. VALLADARES said he hid behind a tree while the plane landed and didn't have to coordinate anything. VALLADARES said the cocaine load belonged to LUISON (VALLADARES believes LUISON is Luis ESCALANTE). LEO paid VALLADARES \$3,000 US currency for his (VALLADARES) participation.

12. VALLADARES stated that in 2012, VALLADARES accompanied LEO and Fabio LOBO while they waited for a cocaine-laden aircraft to arrive at a clandestine airstrip at the edge of a river in the Cortés Department. VALLADARES, LEO and LOBO waited through the night in a house distant from the airstrip itself. VALLADARES never saw the plane nor the load of cocaine. LEO kept referring to LOBO as "COMMANDER". VALLADARES left the house early in the morning with a driver only known as SAUL LNU, back to San Pedro Sula. VALLADARES was not paid for this trip.

13. VALLADARES stated he normally didn't carry his service weapon when meeting LEO, except when VALLADARES was driving his own car. When riding in LEO's car, VALLADARES would leave his his badge and service weapon inside his own car, which he would leave parked in an undisclosed area. VALLADARES normally was not required to wear a police uniform as he was a plain clothes investigator.

14. VALLADARES stated that in 2014, VALLADARES helped LEO in procuring high-ranking officers of the Honduran police to participate in a meeting in furtherance of drug trafficking. LEO requested VALLADARES to get 8-10 *comisarios* (commissioners) to provide security for, and coordinate the receipt of, a multi-ton cocaine load, and to facilitate the safe and uneventful transportation of the load from one place to another within Honduras. To that effect, VALLADARES contacted Honduran police officers Ludwig Criss ZELAYA and Juan Manuel AVILA-Meza to attend the meeting. VALLADARES followed-up with additional coordinations with ZELAYA to get more officers to go to the meeting. VALLADARES added that there were two meetings, one in San Pedro Sula and one in Tegucigalpa. On the same day of the meeting in Tegucigalpa, VALLADARES coordinated with Fabio LOBO to meet at a gas station near the house where the meeting was to take place. VALLADARES subsequently met LOBO at the gas station, where

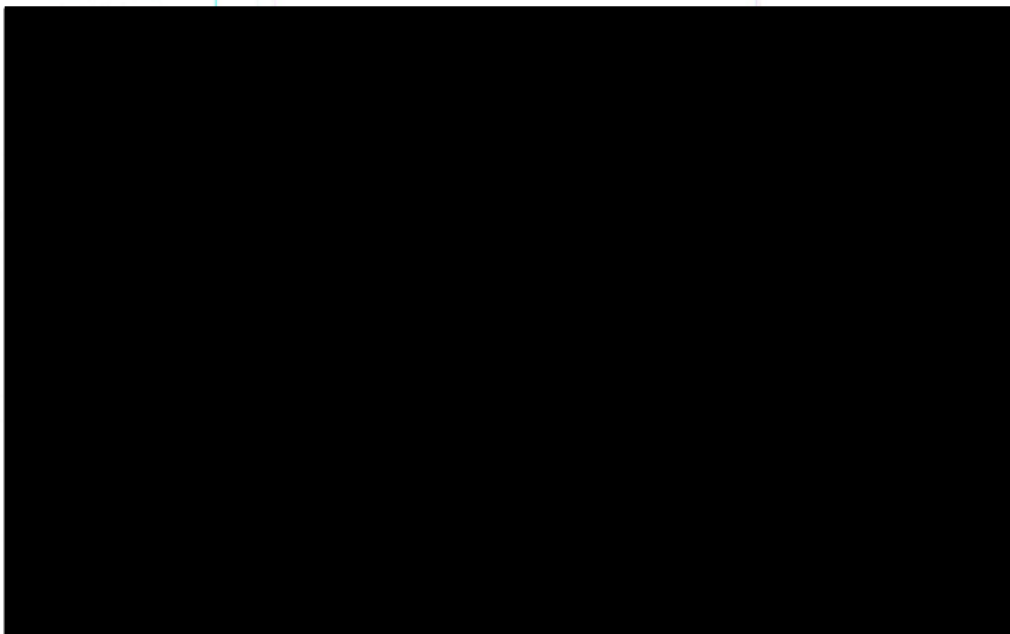
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the others (police officers) were also waiting before continuing to the house. VALLADARES didn't participate in any of the meetings.

15. VALLADARES stated that VALLADARES drove "the Mexicans" that participated in the meetings from San Pedro Sula to Yoro Department, and back. VALLADARES said he particularly drove the younger Mexican around. At one point, Marvin RIVERA, a cousin of LEO, told VALLADARES that RIVERA suspected the Mexicans were "juras" (police, or working for the police). In May-June 2014, VALLADARES began suspecting the Mexicans were working for law enforcement when VALLADARES gave the Mexicans \$2,000 US currency (from LEO) to pay for the hotel. VALLADARES thought it was odd given the impression that the Mexicans were supposed to be big time drug traffickers capable of paying for their own expenses.

16. After reviewing the information provided by VALLADARES, the interview was terminated at about 3:05 p.m.

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